DRAWING BLOOD: SPILLED INK

Eastman's Back in Circulation With Drawing Blood: Spilled Ink

If readers confuse *Kevin Eastman's* new series ***Drawing Blood*** with Eastman's autobiography, it's understandable. The new series focuses on a relatively unknown cartoonist who, along with his creative partner, created a quirky anthropomorphic martial-arts comic that grew into a billion-dollar franchise.

But this isn't the story of *Kevin Eastman*. It's the story of Shane "Books" Bookman and his creation, The Radically Rearranged Ronin Ragdolls. And you can read all about it in ***Drawing Blood: Spilled Ink,*** a four-issue series created and co-written by *Kevin Eastman* & *David Avallone* and illustrated by *Ben Bishop*.

While Bookman's life has a lot in common with Eastman's, this is not a *roman a clef* tale. "While decent chunk of Shane was modeled after many of my own experiences," Eastman said, "a bunch more is based on different experiences told to me, usually in a hotel bar after a long day at a comic con by different friends and associates in the comic book industry—which is cool because as the night wears on and the drinks stack up, the stories get even better!

"The concept is also grounded in a number of similar scenarios you'd find with a sudden rock star—actor/actress—sports star—or someone who wins the lottery: a person that makes too much money too young and goes off the deep end, that is really at the heart of the story we're exploring.

"Of many things that make Shane *not Kevin Eastman* would be some of the insane antics we put our protagonist through—like the opening gunfight, for example. I have never been in a gunfight—not yet anyway—thus the 'Completely Fictional True Story' tag line David came up with. We have the benefit of hindsight to twist the outcome either more positive or negative, as well as enhancing a memory, tall tale, or anecdote into something so much more fun to suit our story."

Of course, there's another key difference: Eastman is *not* "a cartoonist on the skids," as Bookman has been described—in fact, Eastman has experienced a tremendous renaissance in the past half-decade or so, and his work as both a writer and an artist is still admired by legions of fans. Was there ever a time when he worried that he *might* end up like Shane Bookman?

"Here's a funny and true story—actually, one we should use in a future issue. *Simon Bisley* and I have done a ton of work together over the years, and he used to spend quite a lot of time working with me in my LA studio back in the late '90s—lots of *really* late nights burning deadlines. At some point one of us brought up the fact of how lucky we are to have the jobs we have—drawing comics to make a living, which led to the thought of 'What if there comes a day when no one will hire us anymore? We'll end up homeless!' We even went as far as to work on a few designs of what our shopping carts would look like, and where we could do 'street sketches' for people to try and earn food money around Santa Monica or Venice.

"Just to be clear—neither Simon nor I think the struggles of the homeless are humorous, we actually seriously acknowledged how *incredibly* lucky we are to have fans that support our artistic endeavors, because we're not good at anything else! We send our heartfelt thanks to *all* our fans!"

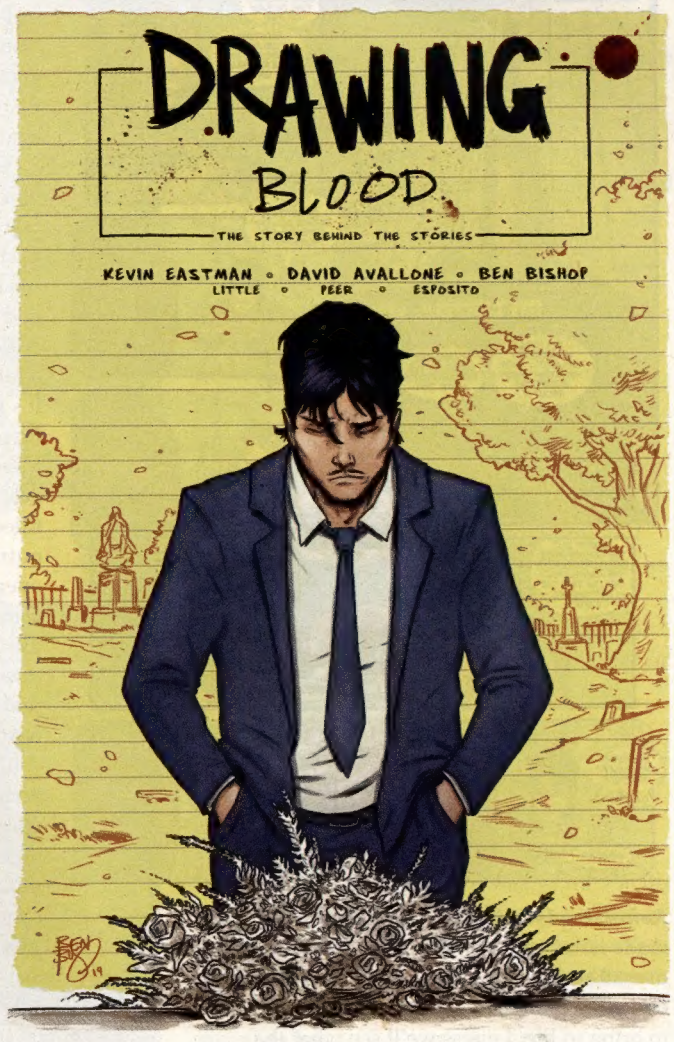
A lot of creators who achieve a level of success end up retiring or moving away from the day-to-day creative process, but Eastman embraced it with an admirable vitality that reflects a genuine passion for comics. "I've loved comics my entire life, and I honestly don't know what I would do with myself otherwise. It really has been a dream from early childhood, back then a fantasy for sure, but all I wanted to be when I grew up was *Jack Kirby*—or at least try to follow in his footsteps. I think all the time about how incredible it would be to be a real cartoonist, someone that got to get out of bed and write and draw comics all day every day– tell the kinds of stories I wanted to tell, the kind of stories I wanted to read, and be able to support a family.

"As of this year, I have been doing exactly that for *35 years*! What an incredible thing! I completely understand that I was one of the lucky ones trying to make their way in our business, and blessed far more than I felt I deserve, which I why I spent a great deal of my good fortune giving back to a community and a medium that have given me so much. I really feel I am the luckiest person on Earth—I have been given a gift and an opportunity, and I'm not going to waste it."

Exploring Shane Bookman's life in ***Drawing Blood*** comes with certain benefits. "There is absolutely a cathartic nature to bits and pieces of the story, for both David and me.—working through a scene with the inside knowledge of parts of our industry most people have never seen or spinning an anecdote that most likely has already gotten better over time and making it more outrageous. We really are having *way* too much fun playing off the framework of something we are both so familiar with.

"But I would say most of the overall satisfaction I get from the world of ***Drawing Blood*** is telling a great story with people I really like. I think David's scripts are brilliant, Ben's artwork is epic—and adding the legendary Canadian *Troy Little* into the mix is a perfect storm of awesomeness for me."

It turns out that ***Drawing Blood*** is one of *two* Eastman creations that fans can enjoy this year. He has also created the "book within a book," ***Radically Rearranged Ronin Ragdolls***. In this special oneshot, he is not only referencing his own ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles,*** but also the cottage industry of TMNT knockoffs that sprang up in the mid- to late 1980s. *John Lennon* reportedly used to enjoy listening to Beatles imitators; did Eastman enjoy any of those TMNT imitators... and is it fun being a TMNT imitator in his own right? "It was a *complete* blast! The idea of the 'book that started it all' for Shane was there from my earliest notes, but as David and I evolved the story together, the Radically Rearranged Ronin Ragdolls became very dear and *very* precious to us. We wanted to make it unique and cool, told with the true heart and soul fans like Shane and his brother Paul would have had back in the day. Most of all it had to be well-grounded in 'all our' collective comic universe—a universe where not only the TMNT exist, but all those awesome parodies of our parody exist. We wanted it to feel exactly like a comic you might have found in a comic store in 1992.



"David and I worked out the story together, and he did a killer job on the final script. I did the basic layouts for Troy—not that he needed them, but we just wanted to play Shane's homage to the TMNT up just right, and I adore the final artwork he produced—completely brilliant! Keep in mind he was also doing double duty on a four-issue ***Rick and Morty*** series at the same time. Blows my mind— what a professional (yet crazy) creator! Oh, and I don't want to forget to mention *Tomi Varga's* colors on ***Radically Rearranged Ronin Ragdolls***—*really* made it sing!

"And yes, 100%—I bought, read, and collected (and still have) all the spinoffs from back in the day! Love them! I think Peter and I counted like 20 or so 'adjective, adjective, adjective noun' titled books at the height of it all. Some were more sincere and earnest than others—but if I had to pick a favorite, the ***Adolescent Radioactive Black Belt Hamsters*** wins hands down."

So what happens if fans like the Ragdolls so much that they want more? * I know I speak for both David and me—hell, Ben and Troy as well, that we'd *love* to do more ***Radically Rearranged***

HMPH. MORE WEAKNESS.
BOOKS HAS SUFFERED A GREAT LOSS. CAN YOU NOT SEE, OTOMO? YOU ARE TOO HARD, I THINK.
HE NEEDS ACTION! HERE, HE HIDES.
BACK TO THE STREETS! FACE THOSE MEN! YOU ARE TRAINED IN SAVATE!

Courtesy of your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

BUT...IF THESE TWO CANADIAN GUYS KEPT ME FROM GETTING MURDERED TODAY, I WAS ONBOARD.
THIS SHOW HAS BEEN A LONG-TIME DREAM OF MINE.
ACCORDING TO THE PAPERS, THE SHOW HAS BEEN PLAGUED WITH...
NOT PLAGUED, JESUS. DO YOU HAVE TO SAY "PLAGUED"?
COMIC TOON
METROPOLIS: BRING
SO...THIS IS MY LATEST PROJECT... YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT IT.
A MUSICAL BASED ON THE FAMOUS FRITZ LANG FILM.
[REC]
ACCIDENTS HAPPEN. NO PROJECT OF THIS SIZE CAN BE MADE WITHOUT SOME BUMPS IN THE ROAD.
"BUMPS" LIKE THE UNFORTUNATE MISADVENTURE WITH THE AERIALISTS... AND THE TIME THE SET CAUGHT FIRE...
WHY DO IT? WHY STEP AWAY FROM THE ART FORM IN WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN WILDLY SUCCESSFUL TO EMBARK ON THIS...
CATASTROPHE?
[REC]
BECAUSE I'M CRAZY? STUPID?
BRAVE?
[REC]
ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE.

Ronin Ragdolls stories! We've discussed and made notes on a bunch of plot ideas for an overall series—Troy and David already beat out an incredible two-part story that we want to bring to life. I guess we'll see what the response is and plan from there—I know if the fans love it as much as we do, we'd love to do more!"

Eastman has given back to comics in so many ways after achieving success; what advice would he offer to Shane if he had the opportunity? "Man, that is a tough one. Interestingly, I spent the day with *Peter Laird* the end of last year, and one of the things we reflected on was hindsight—and the fact that it is always perfect 20/20 vision. Life is always full of regrets, things you wished you'd done differently, or never said—hurting the ones you love out of anger or stupidity, but if you spend your life looking backwards instead of learning from your mistakes and moving forward, you *really* do a number on your mental health. Age of course is a blessing to actually fully understand that, and personally, halfway through my 50s I think I'm starting to get a handle on it! Sort of...

"I guess I would tell him, deep breaths, lots of deep breaths... especially when things get heated. Restraint is the greatest gift and the greatest weapon in your arsenal. Walk away and take some time to think something through before acting on it. Life is tough; we *all* fail at things; I do multiple times a day, day after day, and some days just suck—but when I get to that place, I remind myself that there's always tomorrow to try again to get it right."

Is there an element of "The Road Not Taken" or ***Sliding Doors*** to this tale of Shane Bookman—that is, is Eastman inspired by thoughts of what might have happened if he had followed a different path at a critical moment? "Hmmm... I guess a bit of yes and no—I actually think it's more of an ongoing journey of discovery for both David and me. Meaning, we have created this character and built a world for him, filled with insane characters and outrageous circumstances he has to overcome... and although we have certain milestones and a general idea of how we want the first series to end, the organic happy accidents that happen along the way are the best parts. Beats and ideas you could have not planned; until you arrive in that moment of telling the story. Character moments and reactions, plot developments, and so much more... arriving in that headspace where you feel like you're riding in the back seat and just recording the action is the sweetest spot to be in."

How did the collaboration between Eastman and Avallone come about, and exactly how does it work? "It was really a completely unplanned and totally organic mind meld that allowed this creation to happen. We didn't meet and sit down and say, 'Hey, let's create and write a story together.' It started as a general introduction by a mutual friend at the hotel bar after an Emerald City Comic Con, and an accidental meeting at yet another hotel bar during San Diego Comic Con. We were shooting the breeze about this and that, talking about different projects we we're developing, and I told him about this idea I called 'On the Shoulders of Giants' that I'd been kicking around in various notebooks for ten years or so, and we had this immediate connection over the concept. A few hours later David said the idea was awesome but the title sucked, and he said I should call it ***Drawing Blood***!

"I 100% agreed, and after a ton of phone calls and story meetings, the idea was no longer mine; it was 100% *ours*. In general, I love collaborating with others, but you can't force it—it doesn't work that way. I feel like ***Drawing Blood*** (and the ***Radically Rearranged Ronin Ragdolls***) ended up exactly where it was supposed to: It wasn't planned, it just happened, and that it why we work together so well on it."

Did Eastman ever consider illustrating this series, or did he always plan on bringing in another artist—and what made *Ben Bishop* the man for the job? "From the beginning, I wanted at least one other artist fully involved, doing pencils and inks off my layouts at the very least, and then possibility of two, as the idea of the flashbacks and hallucination scenes emerged from our brainstorming sessions... which grew to three when we decided to add the option of re-creating the ***Radically Rearranged Ronin Ragdolls*** as part of the Kickstarter program. But honestly, I know my strengths and weaknesses in my storytelling and artwork, and my biggest weakness is being able to draw characters consistently and have them act and emote—and that quite simply is the foundation needed to make this story work.

"After that, is was a matter of 'want' versus 'availability,' and David and I were not only huge fans of, but we knew we wanted to work with, both *Ben Bishop* and *Troy Little*—and we worked it out.

"Ben's storytelling, structure, and the visual sense he brings to every panel of David's final script are breathtaking. He's the main ***Drawing Blood*** series artist, including doing the pencils for the flashback pages that I ink and the hallucination scenes Troy brings to life. It's an insanely beautiful combination we'll continue to see throughout the entire series.

"Troy's schedule was even more intensely booked than Ben's, but he fell in love with the Ragdolls, and we were able to get him to do all the finished artwork based on my rough layouts. So much like how everything else worked out for this project, we were *incredibly* lucky to have scored Ben and Troy to bring this beast to life. Brilliant artists.

"Oh, and I don't want this to seem like an after-thought—but it would be criminal to not mention the incredible coloring *Brittney Peer* and *Tomi Varga* brought to both series, as well as *Taylor Esposito's* beautiful lettering. We've truly been blessed with talent on this project and then some."

Does Eastman enjoy doing sequential storytelling, or would he rather just focus on covers? "Honestly, I *really* love both but am far too slow as an artist to keep pace with any kind of an ongoing regular series, especially if I was doing the finished art. I adore the layout process: from the beginning, even pre-***TMNT***, I would work off a pretty basic written outline and figure out the rest of the story while doing the layouts. Working out the pacing, acting, and action beats always seemed the most challenging and exciting, compared to the more technical process of doing finished artwork.

"For the ***TMNT*** issues Peter and I did together, it was way more collaborative, of course—and although I would do the bulk of the layouts for many of the issues, Peter and I were on the same page story-wise. For the execution of the final artwork, it was critical to have both of us extremely hands-on, not only to help blend our different styles, but most of those issues were beasts—35 to 40+ pages long! Besides, that was also my favorite part, especially those very early days when we would work in the same room together—passing pages back and forth. The best time ever.

"As for the covers: Starting and finishing a piece in a few days, as opposed to six to eight weeks on the interiors, is sheer artistic joy! You get to capture one perfect exciting moment or your favorite story beat with a final cover, and that's something incredible to create all on its own."

How long will Shane Bookman's tale run? "At the end of the day it will really be up to the fans how long we'll get to play in Shane Bookman's world—but David and I needed to approach the series as a step-by-step Kickstarter-based comic series and take baby steps forward pending the support we could raise. We were completely blown away by our 1,200 fans that stepped up to fund the first five issues—four ***Drawing Blood*** issues and the ***Radically Rearranged Ronan Ragdolls*** oneshot a year ago, which then allowed us the foundation to evolve the series into a self-publishing event on the 35th anniversary of when *Peter Laird* and I borrowed $1,200 from my uncle to self-publish the first issue of the ***TMNT***!

"It's crazy to think of how the timing fell into place here—it wasn't, it couldn't have been planned more perfectly... if we *had* planned it! Me and David meeting, Ben and Troy coming on board, the fans stepping up and giving us a shot—it feels like it pretty much was out of our control the whole time, but I'll tell you, it sure is awesome to be here right now!

"So, with all that said, David and I have plotted out Shane's full first story arc that ends in issue 12—but we have at least two more full arcs we'd *love* to explore once we get there, so now were just planning *how* to get there. If our luck holds out and the fans like what we're doing—it sure would be a great ride for us all to jump in on and see where it takes us. Cool beans!"

Drawing Blood: Spilled Ink #1 and ***Radically Rearranged Ronin Ragdolls #1,*** both of which are $3.99 comics from Kevin Eastman Studios, are in comic shops now. ***Drawing Blood: Spilled Ink #2*** is scheduled for late June release, with the third issue following in late July.

by Cliff Biggers

Comic Shop News

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Coming Comics—DC in August

The six-issue ***Batman Who Laughs*** series (by *Scott Snyder & Jock)* has expanded to seven issues. And that seventh issue will feature the final showdown between Batman and the Batman Who Laughs... but how does he defeat a foe who knows his every instinct and every move?

Spinning out of the devastating events of ***The Batman Who Laughs***, Superman and Batman are together once more in ***Batman/Superman #1*** (by *Joshua Williamson & David Marquez)*—and they're facing a terrifying new threat that could strike from anywhere. The Dark Knight and the Man of Steel must journey into the depths of Gotham City to learn which of their fellow heroes has been transformed into the horrifying horseman of their most dangerous and deranged foe ever. But can Superman and Batman even trust each other?

Gotham City is under siege by terrorists, and Batman is determined to find the source. But when Boston Brand tries to intervene, he discovers an even more disturbing and deadly truth: The terrorists are led by an inhuman monster in *Neal Adams'* ***Batman vs Ra's Al Ghul #1***. Ra's al Ghul has volunteered his own private security force to aid

the GCPD, and now they are the only thing standing between nuclear terror and the townspeople! But al Ghul's true goal is hidden from everyone's eyes. (In conjunction with the release of this new series, DC is offering a ***Batman #232 Facsimile Edition,*** featuring the first appearance of Ra's al Ghul by *Dennis O'Neil, Neal Adams, & Dick Giordano.)*

The Joker's plan is in full swing in *Sean Murphy's* ***Batman: Curse of the White Knight #2***—with a single devastating secret and his puppet strings controlling the elites, the Clown Prince and his new recruit, Azrael, are ready to eliminate Batman and obliterate the Wayne family's legacy. With Gotham City's identity and institutions hanging in the balance, Gordon makes a surprising public announcement—but Joker's response will send the Bat-family spiraling.

From the pages of ***The Wild Storm,*** the piratical covert team made up of rogue specialists, extraterrestrial soldiers, and a mad astronaut, run by a tech mogul and disguised alien king, is here to stop us from destroying ourselves in ***Wildcats #1*** (by *Warren Ellis & Ramon Villalobos)*. Case in point: The secret space program Skywatch has been performing medical experiments on abducted innocents for decades. One of those experiments is about to explode, and the Wildcats are about to find out how strange their world is... and how high the stakes really are.

Black Mask was one of Gotham City's most ruthless crime lords. He had money, power, and respect. But after months in the Teen Titans' secret prison, Roman Sionis is finally free. Given a new purpose and new abilities thanks to Lex Luthor's offer, he's found a new racket in ***Black Mask: Year of the Villain #1*** (by *Tom Taylor & Cully Hamner)*.

As the universe tilts towards doom, great forces awake in an effort to stop Lex Luthor's mad plans. Dispatching Sinestro, Luthor sends the former Green Lantern to bring these old gods under control—or destroy them before they reach Earth—in ***Sinestro: Year of the Villain #1*** (by *Mark Russell & Brandon Peterson)*.

Thirteen-year-old Dinah Lance knows exactly what she wants, who she is, and where she's going. First, she'll win the battle

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE PRINCESS DIARIES
MEG CABOT
BLACK CANARY
IGNITE
ILLUSTRATED BY
CARA McGEE
A GRAPHIC NOVEL
"Meg Cabot [is the] reigning grande dame of teenage chick lit..." —The New York Times

of the bands with her two best friends; then she'll join the Gotham City Junior Police Academy so she can solve crimes just like her dad. But when a mysterious figure keeps getting in the way of Dinah's goals and threatens her friends and family, she'll learn more about herself and her mother's secret past in ***Black Canary: Ignite,*** a graphic novel by *Meg Cabot & Cara McGee.*

In the aftermath of ***The PolarShield Project***, Jon Kent and Damian "Ian" Wayne, the respective sons of Superman and Batman, are on the run! With their hometown in ruins, and in the absence of their heroic fathers, Jon and Ian are on a mission to find a sample of the deadly virus that's threatening Wyndemere and Jon's mother, Lois Lane. Meanwhile, Candace follows clues that hold the key to her destiny, and her journey is filled with twists and turns as she unlocks powerful abilities she never knew existed in ***Super Sons Book Two: The Foxglove Mission TP*** (by *Ridley Pearson & Ile Gonzalez)*. While their quests threaten to divide the three of them, it's only through teamwork and trust that they can succeed.

Clark Kent's journey of self-discovery continues in ***Superman: Year One #2*** (by *Frank Miller, John Romita Jr, & Danni Miki).* This chapter takes young Clark to the Pacific coast and beyond, as he discovers a place as sensational as he is: Atlantis! There he meets new people, finds love, clashes with gargantuan beasts, and discovers the man he's meant to be.

House of Secrets #92 Facsimile Edition is an ads-and-all reprinting of the landmark issue that introduced Swamp Thing to the world.

Hawk and Dove lead ordinary citizens in an uprising against the rich—but former Doom Patrol member Mento is pulling their strings in ***Titans: Burning Rage #1*** (by *Dan Jurgens, Scot Eaton, & Wayne Faucher).* It's up to the Titans to uncover his sinister purpose before someone gets killed!

Lex Luthor comes home to Metropolis in ***Action Comics #1014*** (by *Brian Bendis & Szymon Kudranski),* a "Year of the Villain" tie-in issue! But what does he have up his sleeve?

Lex Luthor's surprising offer to Black Manta is revealed in ***Aquaman #51*** (by *Kelly Sue DeConnick, Robson Rocha, & Daniel Henriques)*. But is it too good to be true?

After the reawakening of Oracle, the Terrble Trio has decided to team up with her and show Gotham City what they're really made of in ***Batgirl #38*** (by *Cecil Castellucci & Carmine Di Giandomenico)*. Meanwhile, Batgirl has her hands full with a real pest problem: Killer Moth!

Bane has taken over Gotham City in ***Batman #76*** (by *Tom King & Tony S. Daniel)*, and Batman is nowhere to be found. At least, not a Batman anyone recognizes. Flashpoint Batman is now patrolling the city, dispensing a violent brand of justice and taking out rogue villains who haven't yet signed on with Bane.

The Outsiders embark on their mission to rescue Sofia from none other than Ra's al Ghul in ***Batman and the Outsiders #4*** (by *Bryan Hill & Dexter Soy)*. But Ra's has other ideas for the quartet...

Batman and the Turtles grapple with the laws of Krang's combined universe, desperate to return their two worlds to their original states, in ***Batman/Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III #4*** (by *James Tynion IV & Freddie E. Williams II)*. But there are some who do not want things set right.

The Daily Planet has become a beacon of hope for the living as the Anti-Life Equation sweeps the planet in ***DCeased #4*** (by *Tom Taylor, Trevor Hairsine, & Stefano Gaudiano)*. What's left of the Justice League have begun to gather there, bringing survivors and family alike. But the city is being overrun with infected humans... and superhumans!

Deadshot returns to Gotham City following a long stint with the Suicide Squad, and Batman fears that without the oversight of Amanda Waller, Floyd Lawton will go back to his old ways, in ***Detective Comics #1009*** (by *Peter Tomasi & Christian Duce)*. Meanwhile, after taking Lex Luthor's offer, Mr Freeze begins taking action to get exactly what he wants—and killing anyone who stands in his way.

In ***Event Leviathan #3*** (by *Brian Bendis & Alex Maleev)*, the world's greatest detectives—Batman, Green Arrow, Lois Lane, Plastic Man, the Question, and Martian Manhunter—gather to solve the mystery behind the true identity of Leviathan's leaders and the destruction of the world's top intelligence agencies.

With renewed resolve following the events of "The Flash Year One," the Flash is back with a new mission, a new outlook, and a brand-new speedster HQ as "Death of the Speed Force" begins in ***The Flash #76*** (by *Joshua Williamson, Rafa Sandoval, & Jordi Tarragona)*. The Fastest Man Alive is slowing down—and there's only one explanation: The Speed Force is dying.

Twelve parallel worlds! Twelve Green Lanterns! And one unstoppable menace! Hal Jordan joins the Green Lanterns of the Multiverse—including Bat-Lantern, Tangent Green Lantern, and more—to save a dying Multiverse, defeat the relentless Anti-Man, and embark upon their "Quest for the Cosmic Grail" in ***The Green Lantern #10*** (by *Grant Morrison & Liam Sharp)*.

Harley finds Lex Luthor a very hard man to avoid in ***Harley Quinn #64*** (by *Sam Humphries & Otto Schmidt)*.

Following Lex Luthor's "gift," the new and improved Shadow Thief toys with the wounded Hawkman in ***Hawkman #15*** (by *Robert Venditti, Pat Olliffe, & Tom Palmer)*.

The Lex Luthor the League has known and fought is no more, replaced by an apex predator version of Lex, powered by Perpetua with a goal of bringing tragedy to the DC Universe. Now that Lex has powered up villains across the cosmos, he marshals his own troops in ***Justice League #30*** (by *Scott Snyder, James Tynion IV, & Jorge Jimenez)*, sparking a war between the Legion of Doom and the Justice League that will span space, time, and the Multiverse itself.

The new reign of Darkseid begins in the Ghost Sector in ***Justice League Odyssey #12*** (by *Dan Abnett & Will Conrad)*. With the death of the New Gods, he plans to use the Sepulkore to rebuild a new army—but to enslave and control the Ghost Sector, he'll require the help of the New Gods' newest heralds: Cyborg, Starfire, and Azrael!

Famed writer and reporter Lois Lane never worries about speaking truth to power—so what's she hiding from the most powerful man on the planet (and her husband), Superman? Find out in ***Lois Lane #2*** (by *Greg Rucka & Mike Perkins)*.

Tying up all the loose ends—for now—Pearl Tanaka confronts her past and her future in ***Pearl #12*** (by *Brian Bendis & Michael Gaydos)*. Will she choose the path of the artist or the killer?

Luthor offers to train the next generation of supervillains in ***Red Hood: Outlaw #37*** (by *Scott Lobdell & Kenneth Rocafort)*. And as the only supervillain in the world to have trained under Batman himself, Red Hood is the ideal instructor. But has Jason Todd fallen so far that he'd take on the task of forging tomorrow's Legion of Doom or Crime Syndicate?

After their terrifying adventure through the Darklands, Billy and the rest of the Shazam family find themselves going over the rainbow and through the looking glass into the upside-down, topsy-turvy world of the Wozenderlands in ***Shazam! #9*** (by *Geoff Johns & Dale Eaglesham)*.

After a year in space solving the mystery of Krypton's demise, Supergirl returns to Earth in ***Supergirl #33*** (by *Marc Andreyko, Eduardo Pnsicca, & Julio Ferreira)*, only to discover that everything she knew as Kara Danvers is gone!

Lex Luthor is back in Metropolis—and he's ready to wreak havoc in ***Superman #14*** (by *Brian Bendis, Ivan Reis, & Joe Prado*). First stop, the most dangerous woman in the DC Universe: Lois Lane!

Only Jimmy Olsen knows what Superman's secret superpowers truly are—and now those mysteries will finally be shared in ***Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen #2*** (by *Matt Fraction & Steve Lieber0*.

Cheetah returns with a vengeance in ***Wonder Woman #76*** (by *G. Willow Wilson & Jesus Merino*). Lex Luthor has given his fellow Legionnaire of Doom everything she needs to slake her thirst with Diana's blood, once and for all!

The heroes of Young Justice must stay together as they fight to find their way home through the Multiverse in ***Young Justice #8*** (by *Brian Bendis, John Timms, & Elena Casagrande*). Too bad they're about to cross paths with their own evil look-alikes!

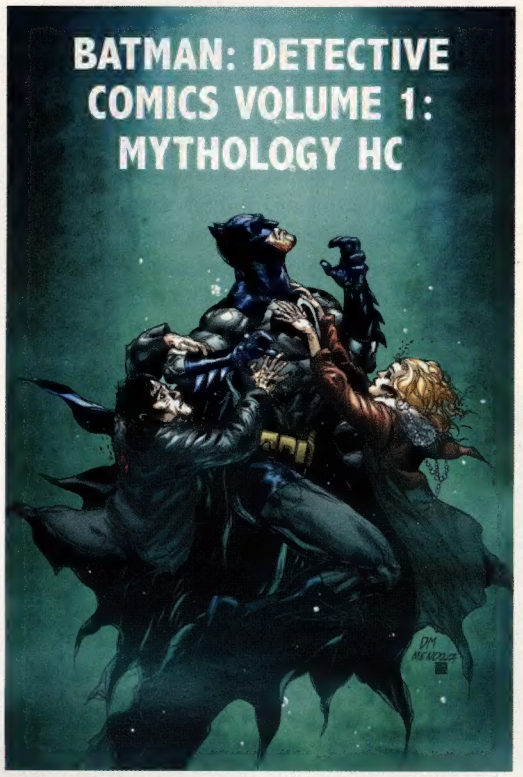
The quest for the secret of the stolen Fabergé egg and its buyer continues as Batman teams up with Green Arrow in ***Batman: Universe #2*** (by *Brian Bendis & Nick Derington*).

En route to Rann, Superman must face an intergalactic pugilist in an epic boxing match, then save an alien family from certain doom in ***Superman: Up in the Sky #2*** (by *Tom King, Andy Kubert, & Sandra Hope*).

Wonder Woman continues to search for Steve Trevor on a strange island in the Bermuda Triangle in ***Wonder Woman: Come Back to Me #2*** (by *Amanda Conner, Jimmy Palmiotti, Chad Hardin, & Tom Derenick*).

DC collected editions (advance solicited for September, October, and November release) include:

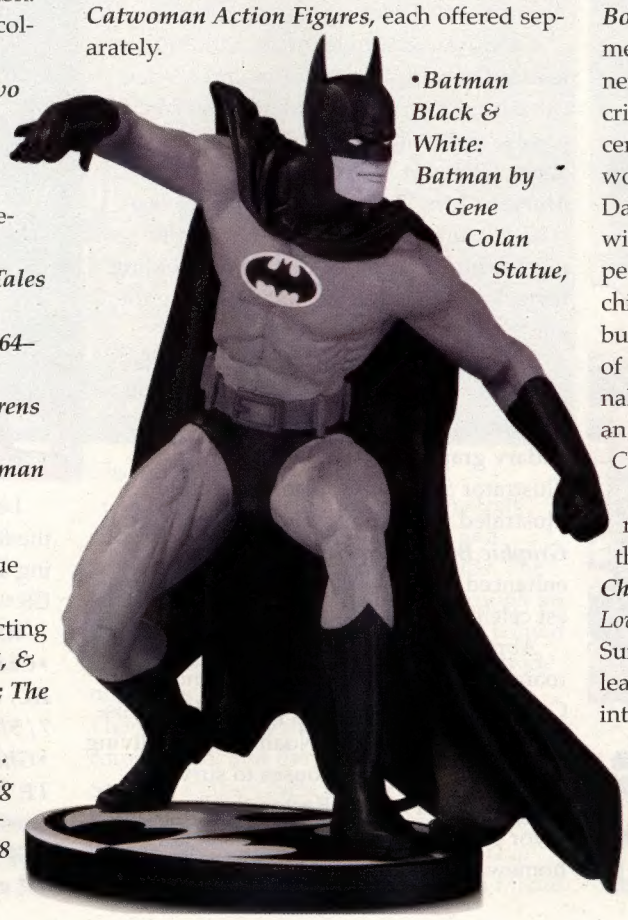
- ***Absolute DC: The New Frontier 15th Anniversary Edition HC,*** featuring new story pages, detailed annotations, alternate sequences, and an extensive gallery of sketches, pinups, action figure art, and much more!
- ***Batman Volume 10: Knightmares TP,*** collecting ***Batman #s 61–63 & 66–69.***
- ***Batman: The Caped Crusader Volume 3 TP,*** collecting ***Batman #s 445–454 & Annual #14*** and ***Detective #615.***



- ***Batman: Detective Comics Volume 1: Mythology HC,*** collecting ***Detective #s 994–999.***
- ***The Batman Who Laughs HC,*** collecting the seven-issue series and ***The Grim Knight #1.***
- ***Batman: Hush TP (New Edition),*** collecting ***Batman #s 608–619*** and more.
- ***Batwoman: Elegy TP (New Edition),*** collecting tales from ***Detective #s 854–860.***
- ***Booster Gold: The Big Fall HC,*** collecting ***Booster Gold #s 1–12*** in color for the first time.
- ***Catwoman Volume 2: Far from Gotham TP,*** collecting ***Catwoman #s 7–13 & Annual #1.***
- ***Crisis on Infinite Earths 35th Anniversary Deluxe Edition HC,*** collecting the landmark 12-issue series.
- ***Deathstroke: Arkham TP,*** collecting ***Deathstroke #s 36–40.***
- ***Final Crisis Omnibus HC (New Edition),*** a new printing of the 1,500+- page collection.
- ***The Flash Volume 10: Force Quest TP,*** collecting ***The Flash #s 58–63.***
- ***Green Lantern by Geoff Johns Book Two TP,*** collecting ***Green Lantern #s 4–20.***
- ***Green Lantern: The Silver Age Volume 4 TP,*** collecting ***Green Lantern #s 36–48.***
- ***Heroes in Crisis HC,*** collecting the nine-issue series.
- ***Heroes in Crisis: The Price and Other Tales TP,*** collecting ***Batman #s 64–65, Green Arrow #s 45 & 48–50,*** and ***The Flash #s 64–65 & Annual #2.***
- ***Harley Quinn and the Gotham City Sirens Omnibus HC (New Edition),*** collecting ***Gotham City Sirens #s 1–26*** and ***Catwoman #83.***
- ***Injustice: Gods Among Us Year Two Deluxe Edition HC,*** collecting the 12-issue series and the annual.
- ***The Joker: His Greatest Jokes TP,*** collecting tales from ***Batman #s 8, 67, 145, 260, 353, & 366; Detective Comics #s 388 & 833–834; The Spectre #51;*** and ***Batman: Prelude to the Wedding—Harley Quinn vs the Joker #1.***
- ***Justice League of America: The Wedding of the Atom and Jean Loring HC,*** collecting ***Justice League of America #s 149–158*** and ***Super-Team Family #s 13–14.***
- ***Scooby-Doo's Greatest Adventures TP,*** featuring 424 pages of Scooby-doings.
- ***Sandman: The Dream Hunters 30th Anniversary Prose Edition TP,*** combining *Neil Gaiman's* prose with *Yoshitaka Amano's* stunning paintings.
- ***Sandman: The Dream Hunters 30th Anniversary Graphic Novel Edition TP,*** collecting the graphic novel version of ***The Dream Hunters*** by *Neil Gaiman & P. Craig Russell.*
- ***Stargirl by Geoff Johns TP,*** collecting ***Stars & STRIPE #s 0–14*** and ***JSA All-Stars #4.***
- ***Superman/Batman: 80 Years Slipcased HC Set,*** featuring ***80 Years of Superman*** and ***80 Years of Batman*** in an illustrated slipcase.
- ***Superman: The Golden Age Omnibus Volume 1 HC (New Edition),*** collecting stories from ***Action #s 1–31, Superman #s 1–7,*** and more.
- ***Transmetropolitan Book Two TP,*** collecting ***Transmet #s 13–24*** and more.
- ***Watchmen TP (New Edition),*** a new edition priced at $24.99.
- ***Wonder Woman by Gail Simone Omnibus HC,*** collecting ***Wonder Woman (2008) #s 14–44 & 600*** and more.
- ***Young Justice Volume 1: Gemworld HC,*** collecting ***Young Justice (2019) #s 1–6.***

Coming in January from DC Collectibles

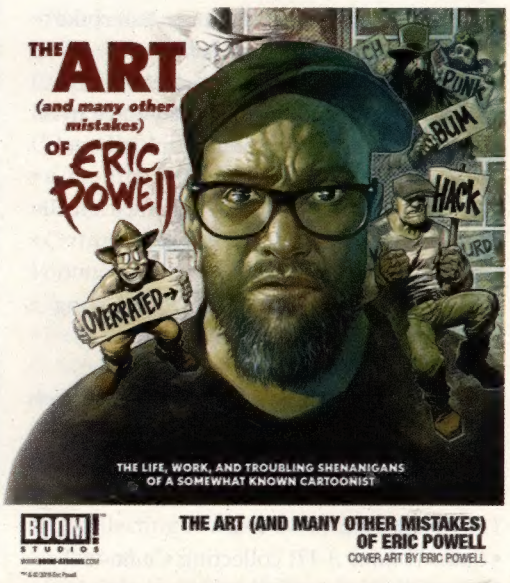
- ***DCTV Batwoman: Batwoman Statue,*** featuring the TV show costume design and the likeness of actress *Ruby Rose.*
- ***DC Designer Series Batman by Rafael Grampa Statue,*** sculpted by *Jean St. Jean & Alejandro Pereira* and limited to 5,000 individually numbered pieces.
- ***Villains Multi-Part Statue: Catwoman,*** sculpted by *Chris Dalberg;* this statue can be displayed on its own or in conjunction with the other villains in the set (Penguin, Joker, Mr Freeze, Harley Quinn, and Deadshot).
- ***DC Essentials: Green Lantern—Hal Jordan, Sinestro, Knightfall Batman,*** and ***Knightfall Catwoman Action Figures,*** each offered separately.



- ***Batman Black & White: Batman by Gene Colan Statue,*** depicting the Dark Knight as illustrated by master stylist *Gene Colan* during his 1980s run on ***Batman*** and ***Detective Comics.***

Coming Comics—Boom! in August

Get ready for a shocking new reimagining of Angel in ***Angel #s 1–4*** (by *Bryan Edward Hill & Gleb Melnikov*) as he walks the line between two worlds: A vampire cursed with a soul, he's spent centuries battling back the forces that would destroy humanity, in an attempt to redeem himself for the crimes committed by the monster he was when he was first turned. But now, when the trail of the most recent demonic uprising takes him to Sunnydale, he realizes that the redemption he seeks can only come at a startling price.


THE ART (and many other mistakes) OF ERIC POWELL
OVERRATED
THE LIFE, WORK, AND TROUBLING SHENANIGANS OF A SOMEWHAT KNOWN CARTOONIST
BOOM! STUDIOS
THE ART (AND MANY OTHER MISTAKES) OF ERIC POWELL
COVER ART BY ERIC POWELL

The Art (and Many Other Mistakes) of Eric Powell sheds light on the artistic prowess of Goon creator Eric Powell, who takes readers all the way back to his childhood with this amazing collection of art.

Cub reporter Madison Jackson is young, scrappy, and hungry to prove that she deserves her coveted college internship at the premiere newspaper in town, ***The Boston Lede,*** so when her police scanner mentions a brutal murder tied to the prominent Boston Kennedys, Madison races to the crime scene, looking for the scoop of the century. What she finds instead is the woman who'll change her life forever: Dahlia Kennedy, celebrity socialite, now widow, covered in gore and the prime suspect in the murder of her husband and child. When Dahlia refuses to talk to anyone but Madison, they begin a dangerous game of cat and mouse that leads the young journalist down a twisted path in ***Bury the Lede,*** an original graphic novel by *Gaby Dunn & Claire Roe.*

Journey back in time and witness the stories of some of the Slayers from all over the globe in ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Chosen Ones #1*** (by *Mairghread Scott, Celia Lowenthal,* and more). Watch the birth of the Sunnydale Hellmouth—an event that will lead to repercussions across the globe... and into the present day.

When a group of Nationalists uses an ancient artifact to bring a villain from Arthurian myth back from the dead to gain power, ex–monster hunter Bridgette McGuire escapes her retirement home

and pulls her unsuspecting grandson Duncan, a museum curator, into a world of magic and mysticism to defeat a legendary threat in ***Once & Future #1*** (by *Kieron Gillen & Dan Mora).*

It's not all laughter and peanuts for Wirt, Greg, and Beatrice when they stumble upon a circus in the Unknown. What starts as good fun quickly becomes a dangerous situation when the Ringmaster sets his eyes on Beatrice to be his next star attraction in ***Over the Garden Wall: Circus Friends OGN Volume 2 TP*** (by *Jonathan Case & John Golden).*

Per of Esterpike is a standard knight in training: brave, hardworking, noble. Oh, and her sister Elena is the nation's most beloved hero. No pressure. Then Per is the only living witness to Elena's death at the hands of a barbarian horde set on wiping Esterpike off the map, and someone has to carry word to the rest of Unity. This is a job for a hero... a job for Elena. But Per is all they have in ***A Sparrow's Roar,*** an original graphic novel by *CR Chua & Paolo Chikiamco.*

Boom! collected editions (advance solicited for September and October release) include:

- ***Adventure Time: Marceline TP,*** collecting Marceline's greatest tales..
- ***Angel Legacy Edition Book One TP,*** collecting Dark Horse's ***Angel #s 1–9, Angel: The Hollower #s 1–3, Angel: Point of Order,*** and ***Angel: Lovely, Dark, and Deep.***
- ***The Avant-Guards Volume 1 TP,*** collecting *The Avant-Guards #s 1–4.*
- ***Coda Volume 3 TP,*** collecting ***Coda #s 9–12.***
- ***Giant Days Volume 11 TP,*** collecting ***Giant Days #s 41–44.***
- ***Jim Henson's Power of the Dark Crystal Volume 2 TP,*** collecting ***Power of the Dark Crystal #s 5–8.***

- ***Wizard Beach TP,*** collecting ***Wizard Beach #s 1–5.***
- ***WWE: Then. Now. Forever. Volume 4 TP,*** collecting ***WWE: Forever #1*** and ***WWE WrestleMania 2019 Special #1***

Coming Comics—IDW in August

All Donald Duck wants to do is take a nice, long, uninterrupted nap, but there are too many distractions and just too much noise at McDuck Manor for him to do so. But then Donald remembers a magical artifact that cancels out all noise! Once he uses it, he can finally take a nap. There's only one problem: It's not only silent in McDuck Manor—it's silent all over the world! Will anyone be able to talk ever again? Find out in ***DuckTales: Silence and Science #1*** (by *Steve Behling, Luca Usai,* and others).

On the formerly fractured plane of Alara, Chandra must protect a village in grave peril—no big deal, especially with a little help from fellow Planeswalker Jace Beleren. But see what happens when the dust of battle clears and Chandra is forced to contend with a problem that can't be burned away in ***Magic: The Gathering—Chandra: Trials of Alara #1*** (by *James Asmus & Eric Koda).*

Carol Danvers' quiet night with BFF Jessica Drew (aka Spider-Woman) takes a cat-astrophic turn when Manhattan's bodegas are suddenly overrun by a host of angry felines in ***Marvel Action: Captain Marvel #1*** (by *Sam Maggs & Sweeney Boo).* And not just any felines—Flerkens, the most terrifying, pocket-dimension-holding, tentacle-devouring kitty-look-alikes in the entire universe!

Revel in this commemoration of Elvis' life in the form of a large-format art book told through the unique vision of legendary graphic novelist, designer, and illustrator *Seymour Chwast.* Beautifully illustrated throughout, ***The Mighty Elvis: A Graphic Biography HC*** presents an enhanced portrait of one of America's greatest celebrities.

Abraham Stubbs and his father Noah roam America in a nomadic existence. Convinced they are being pursued by sinister government forces, Noah has them living off the grid, burgling houses to survive. Elsewhere, on Mount Rector, the lone survivor of a climbing expedition staggers homeward, covered in blood. Both are on an inevitable collision course with the picturesque Canadian resort town of Braeriach in ***Mountainhead #1*** (by *John Lees & Ryan Lee).*

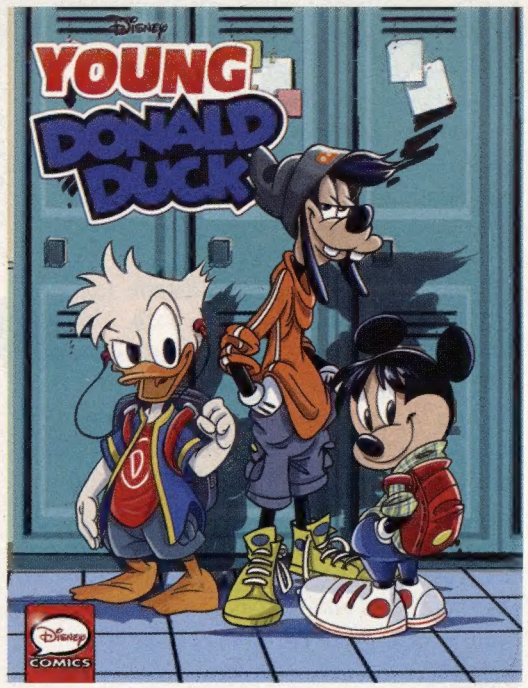
Come one, come all, to the School of Friendship's very first sporting event—the Feats of Friendship! As Sandbar, Smolder, Gallus, Ocellus, Yona, and Silverstream prepare for the new competition, they realize they're going to need one more pony to round out their team. Enter Swift Foot, a mysterious new exchange student! But will she help strengthen the Young Six's bonds of friendship—or just drive them apart? Find out in ***My Little Pony: Feats of Friendship #1*** (by *Ian Flynn & Tony Fleecs).*

Out in the Frontier, the toughest jobs in the galaxy are handled by Freelance Adventuring Crews, and on his 16th birthday (kinda), the delivery boy known as Starkid sends out a call for the best recruits he can get (at his local Stardollars coffee shop) in ***Starcadia Quest #1*** (by *James Roberts & Aurelio Mazzzara).*

You saw the stunning conclusion of the second season of ***Star Trek: Discovery***—now witness what happens next in ***Star Trek: Discovery—Aftermath #1*** (by *Kirstein Beyer, Mike Johnson, & Tony Shasteen)*!

Tangled: The Series—Hair It Is (by *Leigh Dragoon, Katie Cook, Eduard Petrovich,* and others) is a special one-shot featuring four stories starring Rapunzel and all her friends.

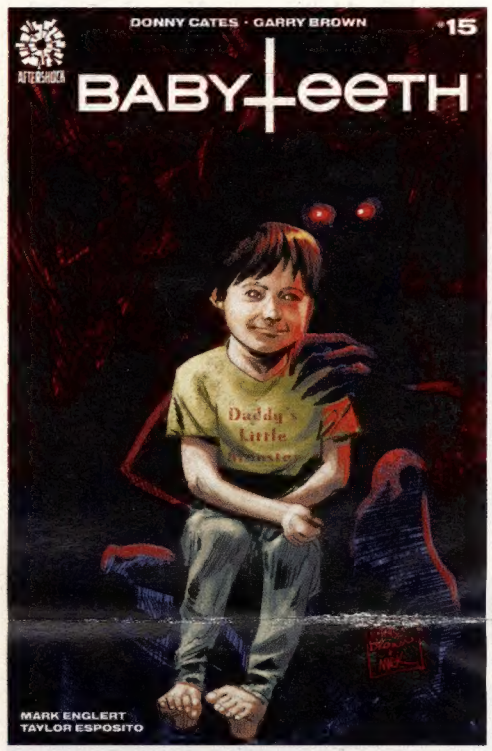
War has gripped the planet Cybertron, but an even deadlier threat looms—an asteroid belt powerful enough to destroy the metal world unless Autobot Field Commander Optimus Prime and his heroic recruits can clear a path for the planet in ***Transformers '84 #0*** (by *Simon Furman & Guido Guidi).*



Learn about li'l Donald's adventures on the farm in ***Young Donald Duck TP,*** featuring a European tale never before seen in the US.

IDW collected editions include:

- ***Complete Little Orphan Annie Volume 16 HC,*** collecting strips from 10/29/51 to 7/5/53.
- ***Ghostbusters 35th Anniversary Collection TP,*** collecting the four 35th Anniversary oneshots.
- ***GI Joe: A Real American Hero Volume 23 TP,*** collecting ***GI Joe #s 261-265.***
- ***Ghosts: Classic Monsters of Pre-Code Horror Comics TP,*** a heaping helping of pre-code spooky tales.
- ***GLOW vs the Star Primas TP,*** collecting ***GLOW #s 1-4.***
- ***Marvel Action Spider-Man—Spider-Chase TP,*** collecting ***Marvel Action Spider-Man #s 4-6.***
- ***Star Trek: The Q Conflict TP,*** collecting the six-issue series.
- ***Tangled: The Series—Hair and Now TP,*** collecting five stories featuring Rapunzel, Eugene, Cassandra, and all their friends.
- ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Volume 22: City at War Part 1 TP,*** collecting ***TMNT #s 90–95.***
- ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Shredder in Hell TP,*** collecting the limited series.



Coming Comics—AfterShock in August

"Cradle" ends in ***Babyteeth #15*** (by *Donny Cates & Garry Brown)* with one of the biggest moments in ***Babyteeth*** history!

It's the celebrity wedding of the century, set in an undisclosed, remote location, with no access to wifi, cell phone reception, or the outside world. But the dream wedding becomes a nightmare when, one by one, the guests are brutally slaughtered by a mysterious killer who brands his victims with a hashtag in ***Bad Reception #1*** (by *Juan Doe & Paul Azaceta).*

In the aftermath of war, Fall's End is littered with the dead. Chip has his territory back... until something else walks into his town in ***Dark Red #6*** (by *Tim Seeley & Corin Howell).* Something not human. Not vampire. Something *hungry.*

Auguste de Rivière is a knight lost in time in ***Knights Temporal #2*** (by *Cullen Bunn & Fran Galan).*

Mary and her Monster Hunters take on Adam and his creature, walking away victorious in ***Mary Shelley: Monster Hunter #5*** (by *Adam Glass, Olivia Cuartero-Briggs, & Hayden Serman).* But when Mary returns to London, she discovers the fight is far from over, and now it's personal.

AfterShock collected editions include:

- ***Dark Ark Volume 3: The World That Waits***

TP, collecting ***Dark Ark #s 11–15.***

- ***Oberon Volume 1: The King of Lies TP,*** collecting ***Oberon #s 1–5.***
- ***Volition Volume 1: Artificial Lives TP,*** collecting ***Volition #s 1–6.***

Coming Comics—Dark Horse in August

Take a step behind the scenes to witness the journey from paper to screen with ***The Art of Star Wars Rebels,*** featuring never-before-seen concept art and process pieces along with exclusive commentary from the creative team behind the show.

A merciless sword and sorcery warrior finds himself blasted through a wormhole to a modern-day metropolis where he must protect those around him from an evil wizard determined to send him to hell in ***Berserker Unbound #1*** (by *Jeff Lemire & Mike Deodato Jr).*

After a mysterious stranger warps reality, the out-of-practice Black Hammer heroes must contend with both Starro and the rest of the DC universe in ***Black Hammer/Justice League—Hammer of Justice #2*** (by *Jeff Lemire & Michael Walsh).* Meanwhile, Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, and Cyborg try to adjust to life on Black Hammer Farm, while Colonel Weird and the Green Lantern try to uncover the secret behind this reality swap and the strange man who started it all.

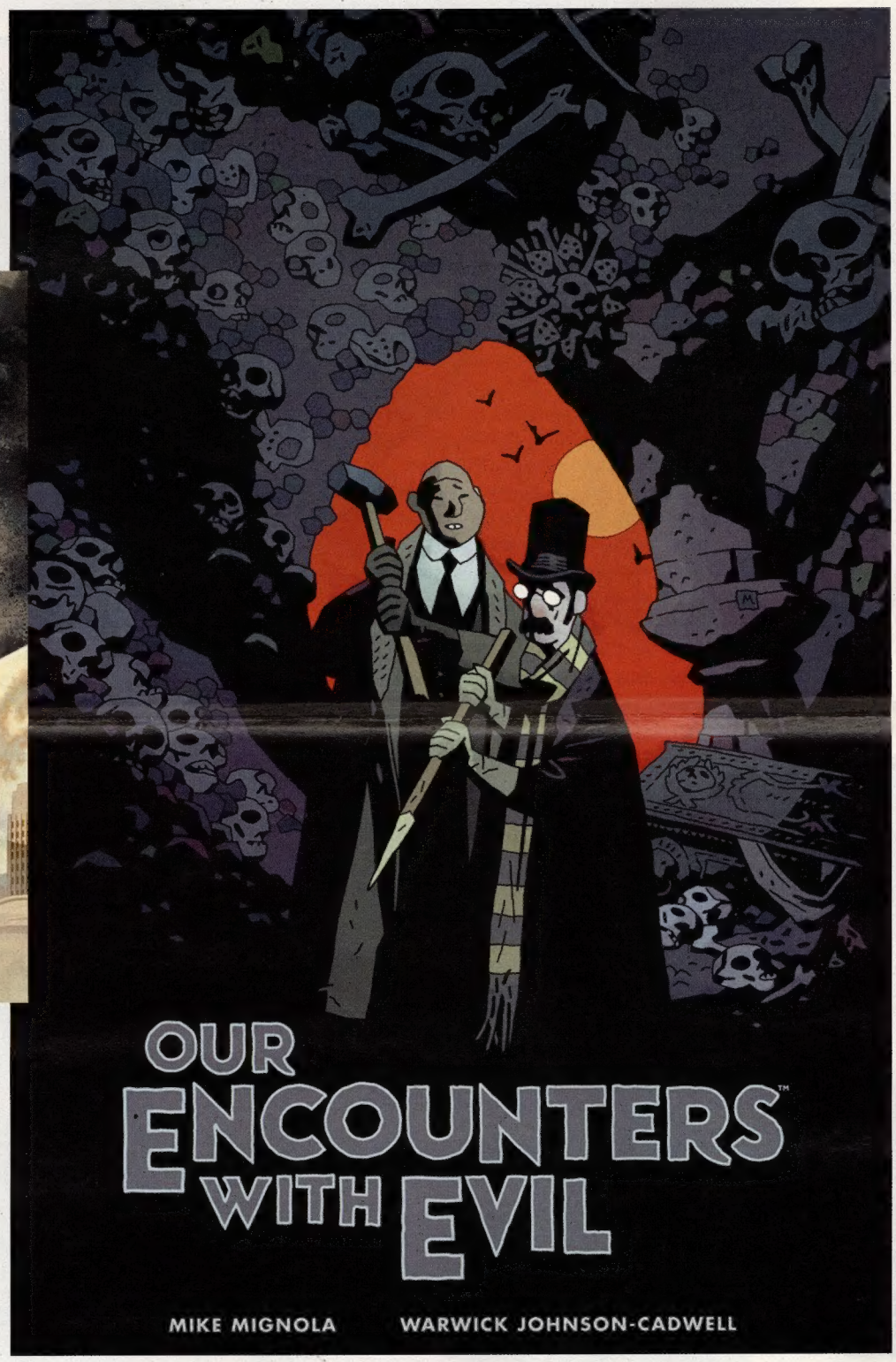
Discover more about Anna and Elsa, from their perspectives, in ***Disney Frozen (YA Retelling)*** (by *Cecil Castellucci & Paola Antista),* an expanded retelling of the timeless Oscar®-winning film.

A small New Hampshire town plagued by disappearances is shaken when a local discovers a pile of corpses that date back decades, and Hellboy and BPRD Agent Kinsley arrive on the scene only to be overwhelmed by supernatural theories for the ritualistic killings in ***Hellboy and the BPRD: Saturn Returns #1*** (by *Mike Mignola, Scott Allie, & Christopher Mitten).*

HP Lovecraft's At the Mountains of Madness Volume 2 TP continues *Gou Tanabe's* adaptation of HPL's classic tale.

From blocks to panels, Minecraft returns to comics in ***Minecraft: Stories from the Overworld HC*** (by *Hope Larsen, Kevin Panetta, Ian Flynn, Rafer Roberts, & Meredith Gran).*

After crash-landing on a desolate planet, Ed and Gordon are taken in by some friendly locals who reveal an unexpected food source in ***The Orville #2*** (by *David Goodman & David Cabeza).* Then, while they investigate the cause of their crash, the fate of a long-lost Union vessel is revealed. Will a dark history repeat itself as Kelly and the Orville crew search for the missing pair?



Our Encounters with Evil: Adventures of Professor JT Meinhardt and His Assistant Mr Knox HC (by *Mike Mignola & Warwick Johnson-Cadwell*) follows Professor JT Meinhardt and Mr Knox as they continue their pursuit of ne'er-do-well creatures of the night!

Set against the backdrop of the disastrous 2017 floods in northern England, ***Rain*** (by *Mary M. Talbot & Bryan Talbot)* chronicles the relationship between two young women, one an environmental activist. Their wild moorland is being criminally mismanaged; crops are being poisoned, and animals are being slaughtered. The characters are fictional: The tragedy is shockingly real.

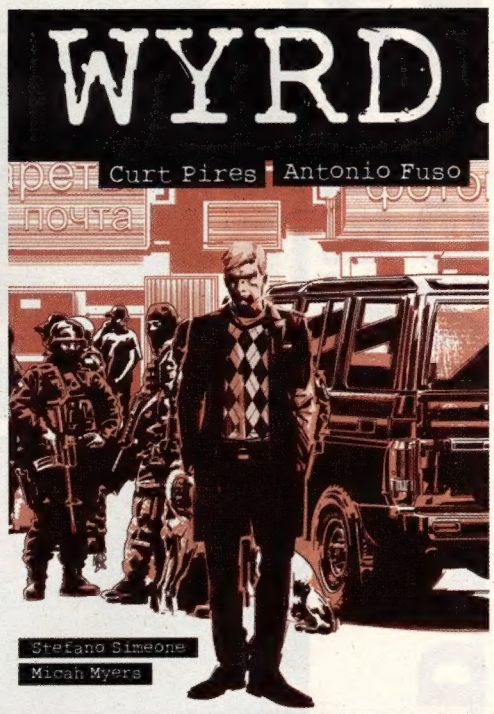
Francine's precognitive abilities are put to the test when she and Ricky attempt to escape Hawkins National Laboratory and save the other children from Dr Brenner's cruel experiments in ***Stranger Things: Six #4*** (by *Jody Houser, Edgar Salazar, & Kieth Champagne).*

In the far future, a military-industrial complex reigns over all humanity and actively destroys distant alien worlds. The galaxy's only hope can be found through an unlikely pair: an astral-projecting cat named Lou and his loving owner Kiara, who trade nine lives for the well-being of billions. Their revolt is a battle for love, friendship, compassion, and the soul of humanity in ***Strayed #1*** (by *Carlos Giffoni & Juan Doe).*

Get ready for mobsters, magic, and mayhem in the Prohibition era in ***Tommy-Gun Wizards #1*** (by *Christian Ward & Sami Kivela).*

Dark Horse collected editions (advance solicited for September, Otober, and November release) include:

- ***Aliens: Defiance Library Edition HC,*** collecting ***Alien: Defiance Vols 1 & 2.***
- ***Aliens vs Predator: The Essential Comics TP,*** collecting the original ***AvP*** series, ***AvP: War,*** and ***AvP: Three World War.***
- ***Avatar: Tsu'tey's Path TP,*** collecting the six-issue series and more.
- ***Bad Luck Chuck TP,*** collecting the four-issue series.
- ***Baltimore Omnibus Volume 1 HC,*** collecting ***Baltimore Vols 1-4.***
- ***Berserk Deluxe Edition Volume 3 HC,*** collecting ***Berserk Vols 7-9.***
- ***Black Hammer '45: From the World of Black Hammer TP,*** collecting the four-issue series.
- ***Black Hammer: Streets of Spiral TP,*** collecting ***Black Hammer: Giant- Sized Annual, Black Hammer: Cthu-Louise, World of Black Hammer,*** and material from ***Free Comic Book Day 2019.***
- ***Calamity Kate TP,*** collecting the four-issue miniseries
- ***Critical Role: Vox Machina Origins Volume 1 TP,*** presenting ***Vox Machina's*** origin story in paperback!
- ***Dept H Omnibus Volume 2: Decompressed & Lifeboat TP,*** collecting ***Dept H #s 13–24*** and more.
- ***EC Archives: Frontline Combat Volume 2 TP,*** collecting ***Frontline Combat #s 7–12.***
- ***Harrow County Library Edition Volume 4 HC,*** collecting ***Harrow County Vols 7 & 8*** and more.
- ***Invisible Kingdom Volume 1: Walking the Path TP,*** collecting ***Invisible Kingdom #s 1–5.***
- ***Mind MGMT Omnibus Volume 3: The Eraser and the Immortals TP,*** collecting ***Mind MGMT Vols 5 & 6.***
- ***The Umbrella Academy Library Edition Volume 1: Apocalypse Suite HC,*** collecting the complete first series, with the short stories "Mon Dieu!" and "But the Past Ain't Through with You," as well as an expanded 50-page sketchbook section.
- ***Wyrd TP,*** collecting ***Wyrd #s 1–4.***



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DRAWING BLOOD: SPILLED INK

LOOKING BACK NOW... I THINK IT'S PRETTY UNLIKELY IT WAS THEM.
IT WASN'T KOURTNEY... AND IT WASN'T THE LITHUANIANS.
CHASING DREAMS AND RUNNING FROM NIGHTMARES, AND IT WAS ALL A MIRAGE ANYWAY.
TOO NAIL-ON-THE-HEAD? MAYBE. BUT LIFE'S LIKE THAT SOMETIMES.
MIDNIGHT SUSHI
24 HOUR SUSHI
DREAMS OR NIGHTMARES... A MAN'S GOTTA EAT.